

**FY2020 Budget Hearing #5 Chilmark FinCom & Selectmen Joint
Meeting Minutes January 31, 2019**

Present: FinCom: Chairman Rob Hannemann, Eric Glasgow, Vicki Divoll, Don Leopold, Susan Murphy, Marshall Carroll and Bruce Golden. Selectmen: Warren Doty *James Malkin and Bill Rossi were not present.* Others: Tim Carroll, Melanie Becker, Skipper Manter, Susan Stevens, Mark Friedman, Donna Lowell Bettencourt, Mary Boyd, Robert Lionette, Sarah Dingley, Matt D'Andrea, Fire Chief David Norton, Diana DeBlase and MVTV videographer.

At 7:00 PM Chairman Hannemann called meeting to order in the Selectmen's meeting room on the second floor of the town hall.

Budget Department # 710 Debt:

Town Treasurer Ms. Becker gave out a document outlining the Town's borrowing and then discussed the policies and regional department impact. Mr. Carroll said for bonding purposes we keep 15% of the budget value in a savings account. Ms. Becker said we usually keep our debt lower than 10% but came close to it when we had to borrow after the fire in Menemsha Harbor for rebuilding. FinCom Chairman thanked Ms. Becker for the clear presentation. Mr. Carroll said we have a AAA bond rating due in part to Ms. Becker's efforts.

Budget Department # 220 Fire Department:

Fire Chief David Norton presented this budget along with Don Leopold (as the FinCom liaison to the Fire Department). Chief Norton said he has added \$20,000.00 to the Chief salary budget line. Mr. Leopold said this might be a conservative figure (\$85,000.00) as we progress with the succession plan for Fire Chief. Tim Carroll stressed the importance of evaluating job function and then move through the step and grade and how to fund.

Chairman Hannemann thanked Chief Norton and said this budget other than the salary discussion is mostly unchanged.

Budget Department # 300 Education:

Chairman Hannemann said the schools are a significant part of our budget with increasing costs that are concerning. Chairman Hannemann said for example the High School budget is up 6% and the Up Island Regional School is up 5% that is more than two times the inflation rate.

School Superintendent D'Andrea confirmed that the High School is the 3rd highest cost per pupil in the State. Superintendent D'Andrea said they have looking closely at where the higher costs are. Superintendent D'Andrea explained that the vocational department and the contractual increases and OPEB are factors. Ms. Murphy said it's unrealistic to look at cost per pupil. Chairman Hannemann said it's a jump-off point for focus and discussion. Discussion ensued.

Superintendent & Shared Services Budget:

Superintendent D'Andrea handed out a highlights sheet. Mr. Friedman handed out a budget highlights for the Regional High School. There was discussion on both.

Up Island Regional School District:

Superintendent D'Andrea handed out a budget highlights sheet. Principal Donna Lowell Bettencourt (WT School) discussed this budget. Principal Stevens (Chilmark School) spoke about the upgrades needed for the new operating systems for the state testing. Principal Stevens when asked for a wish list for the school by Don Leopold said a maintenance person for the Chilmark School building.

Up Island Regional School District Continued...

Mr. Leopold asked the principals how much of their time goes into building infrastructure stuff. Ms. Stevens said about 1 hour per day. Ms. Lowell Bettencourt said not as much now as Amy Tierney at the Superintendent's Office is the manager of projects now.

Mr. Manter said parents have 6 schools to choose from on the island to send their children to.

There was discussion on Annual Town Meeting warrant articles for the West Tisbury School parking lot design costs and decks around the school. Chilmark School has windows and to replace with clad and not wood.

Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS):

Principal Sarah Dingley presented this budget. Chilmark's total is estimated to be \$906,651.95 but will be reduced with the 0% health insurance premium. Mr. Friedman reminded people present that what is driving the budget is the long-term liabilities (OPEB) and the High School is taking significant steps to fund them.

There was extensive discussion on MVRHS design plan costs and the importance of having a schematic design for the towns to vote about at their Annual Town Meetings. Mr. Friedman said this is a valuable step in securing a grant for partial funding (up to 40%) of the new building for the MVRHS.

Chilmark school representative Rob Lionette said the Auditors remind us that OPEB funding is really important especially when going for a loan. Mr. Lionette said the E&D (Excess and Deficiency) spending when the school thinks a warrant article will fail concerns him. Mr. Lionette said he would like the tax payers to have a voice towards major projects. Mr. Lionette said there are some very impressive practices at the schools; their 5 year refresh on technology is a great practice and forward thinking he really supports.

At 9:18 PM With no further items for discussion Mr. Golden moved to adjourn. Ms. Murphy seconded the motion. **SO VOTED:** FinCom: 7 Ayes

Minutes respectfully submitted by Diana DeBlase. **Approved 01/23/2020**

Document List:

- Budget highlight sheets from the School Departments